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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
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Thesis

THE INFLUENCE OF NATURE IN GERMAN LITERATURE

by

Leonard Field Hubbard

(A.B., Harvard, 1931)

submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for
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"Und unter vielem Verhassten ist
mir das Schreiben das Verhasseste."

--Egmont



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Preface

The word "nature" has such a multitude of applications that I deem it essential for me to designate in advance what I mean in this discussion by the word, for it is as all-embracing as the heavens themselves. By an easy transfer of thoughts we use "nature" to mean, for example, Will, Destiny, God, the Unknown or the Supernatural, character, state of mind, or instinct; in similar confusion we speak of the nature of a new discovery and of the glorious beauty of nature that we see in the open country, where man has not yet defiled his world with his ceaseless civilizing labors.

It is this last connotation of the word, however, with which I am concerned. In this treatise, "Nature" means the phenomena of the universe independent of Man--hills, fields, lakes, flowers, birds and animals; the stars and moon, the rain and wind, the sun, the sky, and the night.

So broad is this field of inquiry that one can do little more than report in a general sort of way. My introduction to the main body is long because I believe it necessary for me to prove the validity of my angle of approach. A comparatively small amount of literature has been touched upon, because I believe intellectual application to representative works yields more valuable results than mass reading at random.

I present my research in German literature with the earnest desire that the part Nature plays in it, a leading one, may be more widely recognized, and in the hope that the German character will be better understood.

Leonard Field Hubbard
Boston, April 25, 1932

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THE INFLUENCE OF NATURE
IN
GERMAN LITERATURE

I. The importance of Nature in German Life
a) German origins

Away back before the days of Alaric, the German tribes, whom Tacitus later brought to the attention of the civilized world in his Germania, were wanderers and fighters. They roamed where they wished and conquered what they wanted. Their very existence depended on their knowledge and use of the terrain; hills and forests and animals were brothers to them. Thus flourished in the Teutonic soul an unconscious love for Nature which grew into a conscious one, that down through the years and up to this very day is an essential characteristic. Kuno Francke says:¹ "To the German the enjoyment of nature is a sacred matter. A short time before his death, in his eightieth year, Ludwig Tieck declared that the greatest event in his whole life, the event which had influenced and shaped his character more than any other, had been a sunrise which he had watched as a youth of eighteen when he was tramping in the Thuringian mountains. That is German sentiment. That is what millions of Germans feel today. That is what makes the flowerpots bloom behind the windowpanes--kept so scrupulously clean--of German tenement houses; what has transformed the public squares

of German cities into parks and meadows."

b) City planning

If America seems to have moved the city into the country, Germany has reversed the formula and moved the country into the city. To be sure, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington have parks--Boston has her Charles River Basin project--but these are different from the German "Gärten". Look at the maps of various German cities, chosen at random. It is a source of amazement, and significant for the understanding of anything German to note the great abundance of areas reserved for natural beauty in the urban districts. Hamburg, Bremen, Stuttgart, and Dresden have parks almost a mile long, where space is precious. Munich's famous "Englischer Garten" is almost two miles in length.² And the air traveler is astounded to see the extent of the Berlin Tiergarten and the lovely Unter den Linden in the very heart of Germany's capital city.

Much more remarkable, however, is the fact that you will find some sort of "Garten" in every little town in Germany. It is a matter of civic pride and common joy to have one--a Tiergarten if possible--and not just a question of duty for a benevolent Park Commission, as in our land. When the weather is pleasant, every German who can goes to the Garten. Here the children romp, the young people play

games, and the grown-ups talk, read, or bask in the sun if they aren't participating in sport themselves. The Grönewald and the Wannsee near Berlin are a revelation in themselves. On the fields near the great Tempelhofer Airarome on a hot day people sprawl as thick as arosophila in a banana culture! On the banks of the Elbe are thousands of nature lovers who frolic with more regard for health than for the decree of society which bids us cultivate shame by wearing superfluous clothing.

c. Customs affected by Nature

The inhabitants of the smaller towns take a particular delight in evening strolls in their parks. The typical Garten consists of a small body of water in a setting of lovely trees and shrubbery, the linden predominating. Gravel walks wind away from the banks, splendid flowers bloom at either hand; a few ducks or swans paddle lazily about on the quiet water. The townspeople mingle together and absorb with personal interest and satisfaction the loveliness of the flowers, the fragrance of the lindens, and the first transatlantic practices of the young swans in the pond. Lovers stroll hand in hand here, and old men philosophize in a romantic sunset of life.

Wherever there is beauty, the Germans have made it accessible. Beautiful paths lead

through the Harz, through Saxon Switzerland, and the Black Forest. If there is a view, the Germans have an observation tower, and often a hotel.

The highest mountain in Germany, the Zugspitze, rises to a height of nearly 10,000 feet. It stands on the border-line of Austria, between Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Innsbruck. This Alp is a good example of how dear Nature is to the German heart; it has two huts on the main trail of ascent, a small hotel at the summit, served by two Schwebelbahnen, and a very large hotel on the broad col not far from the summit, while numerous inns perch on the precipitous slopes of the lower mountains of the group. And these mountains of Southern Germany are better known in Hamburg or Bremen than is Mt. Washington in New York.

The American traveler who tries the life of a Wandervogel is astounded to see how many people he will meet on the forest paths. Not simply the youngsters, but also the middle-aged and old, fat Fraus as well as frisky fathers, explore the wooded paths with all the delight of a child. No nation illustrates better than the Germans the truth of the words,

"Ein Volk bleibt immer kindisch."³

A particularly jolly relationship is that of the father and daughter, whom one meets so many times on merry expeditions to out-of-the-way places.

Sunday is a favorite excursion day for the trampers. The third class coaches are crowded with people who are riding a few miles away to search out new beauty spots. University students and "high school" boys spend their summer vacations exploring remote corners of the Fatherland, and hunting for the Edelweiss above timber-line. This wholesale seeking-out of Nature has a practical effect in economics exactly in accord with the time-honored law of supply and demand. I myself breathed the classic air of Weimar each night from a comfortable straw bed for a sum inversely proportional to the benefits derived--to wit, rifty Pfennigs ($12\frac{1}{2}$ cents)--which would never have been possible had not many generations of German boys and girls loved the Thüringer Wald even as American youth worships the luxurious purr of the Ford roadster.

In these hard times of international financial indigestion, the German has found in Nature something which offers permanent comfort and sympathy. Those who no longer have homes or occupations have turned to the forests and the fields. These unfortunate and respected people know their country's secrets of natural beauty as few of us know our native cities.

The Jugendvereins and Sportklubs devoted to the out-of-doors are myriad. The water has a particular fascination, and Germany's streams hold thousands of tiny double-oared canvas boats. The Binnen Alster at Hamburg, comparable to the Charles River Basin, is

always so dotted with little sailing craft that it hardly seems possible there can be wind enough to propel them all!

Nature plays a prominent part in every German festival. I saw the city of Falkenau prepared for a peasant celebration. The entire city square and all the building fronts were covered with flowers and greens. Flowers were also much used, in great abundance, at Himmelfahrt in Bavaria during the rejoicing on the anniversary of Marias Himmelfahrt. The birthdays of all great men are remembered with flowers and wreaths. Kuno Francke says it is love of Nature which "makes Whitsuntide, with its joyful roaming through field and forest, with its bedecking of all houses with the young foliage, the most charming of all German holidays."⁴

d) Country life

Among the peasants and the mountaineers one might expect that familiarity would breed, if not contempt, at least indifference. In our own New Hampshire many farmers who live on the shores of the largest lake, Winnepegaukee, will not venture near its waters. They say they would not trust their lives to any boat whatsoever because, from their hillside farms on windy days, they claim they can "almost see bottom between the crests of

the waves!" Some have never climbed to the top of the mountain in whose shade they have always lived, and will die. The ruined farmhouses of America bear witness to the exodus to the large cities. Contrast this with the German countryman, who knows most of the region about him, and who has not the slightest desire to live elsewhere. The peasant is as much a part of the fields as any lump of earth; the Bavarian mountaineers, those wonderful clear-eyed men dressed in green, with pointed hats holding long feathers, and beards that reach to their waists, are as much a part of the mountains as any other animal there.

The country people enjoy the Wander-vögel immensely, and do everything possible to make their explorations delightful. They not only feed and lodge them, but put themselves to considerable trouble to show the stranger the rarest treasures of the region---a pretty trail, a broad view, an interesting glacial formation, or a hidden waterfall. Then they ask, "Ist Amerika ebenso schön wie unser Deutschland?"

e. Art

If Nature, then, is as important in German life as I have proposed, there must be some corroboratory evidence in the arts to be found. In

drawing and painting it is reasonable to look for the clearest and most objective evidence. I will now endeavor to show, in a crude way, that a very rough approximate parallel with literature may be drawn, for it is an anthropologist's maxim that the arts go hand in hand in the reflection of a civilization. According to logic, we must observe the development of the landscape, in our study:--

"....German perception of the inner life and character of the subject; this penetration below the surface, together with the close observation of details, which is spoken of in the scientific world as German thoroughness (*Gründlichkeit*) made the Germans notably great portrait painters, and advanced the landscape from the position of background to which it was relegated in Italian art (except Venetian) to share equally with the human element in the picture."⁵

German painting, then, began with wall frescoes of Bible scenes, of the great events of kingdoms, with frequent clever animal details.

"Painting was, with few exceptions, practised only by monks till towards the be-

ginning of the twelfth century---all intellectual culture, down to that time, being engrossed by the religious orders." ⁶

The case is very similar in literature. Our first important document is the Codex Argenteus, then Latin manuscripts like Otfried's Book of Gospels. There is also the Hildebrandslied and Ludwigslied, however, and Ecclasis Captivi, the beginning of the beast epic. Learning was pretty closely confined to the monastery library.

From then on up to the fifteenth century Nature conforms to a rather rigid technique in painting.

"...Trees are quite conventional in shape, the backgrounds are gilt, and, in the miniatures, also panelled in pattern." ⁷

We can take for a typical example the altar chest wings done for Philip the Bold by one Melchior Braederlam, and called "Joseph in the Flight into Egypt". But now look at Matthias Grünewald's "Entombment of Christ", in which "the desolation of the landscape with the trees cut off halfway, showing only the bare trunks, creates an atmosphere of profound melancholy and stirs our hearts to sympathy with those mourners' tears." ⁸

And the Netherlandish school, led by Hubert and Jan van Eyck, "in opposition to the Greek ideal.....developed a purely realistic and landscape school" ⁹ that affected

German treatment, by such pictures as Hubert's Holy Warriors and Holy Pilgrims. The schools of Cologne and the Lower Rhine were the outcome in Germany. Martin Schongauer's Christ Appearing to the Magdalen is worthy of mention here, because it is a sacred subject in a German secular setting. In considering Hans Holbein the Grandfather, we read that "the landscape is already well understood; and three birds--a bullfinch, a goldfinch, and a chaffinch, are given with great truth....."¹⁰

Now during that period in literature, the Classic High ~~German~~ period or Middle High German, the court epic and the popular epic prevail, although the Nature motif is gathering strength all the time. Moral teaching employs the fable very effectively; the beast epic grows and varies with Reinke der Vos; and few poets since that day have been able to arouse the world with a Spring-song as did Walther von der Vogelweide. He sings of May and of flowers, and of the linden tree---and love.

Presently began the realistic tendency among the German artists. Three works of Albrecht Dürer deserve examination for our study: Knight, Death, and the Devil, the Adoration of the Trinity, and Melancholy. The first shows a wild, weird background of dark cliffs and tangled undergrowth. The second presents

a very broad, pleasant, North-German-looking country. The third shows a weary, desolate seacoast, where the unhindered rays of the sun are beating down relentlessly.

"Melanchton tells us,¹¹ from the painter's own confession, that the beauty of nature had not unfolded itself to him until a late period;.... that he sighed over the motley pictures of his early days, and mourned that he could no longer hope to emulate the great prototype---Nature."¹²

Lucas Cranach and Hans Holbein the Younger also stand very high among the realists. The St. Sebastian or the latter shows an unusually rich landscape. Holbein has a feeling for the purity of Nature. His excellent Totentanz cycle gives a well-adapted variety of landscape usage.

In literature this is an age of adjustment, the Pseudo-Renaissance. The Thirty Years' War prevented anything remarkable in the world of letters, and just as Art begins to decline, after 1700, the delayed Classical Period of Goethe, Schiller, and Lessing comes in. When others had all turned to military painting, Dietrich helped to maintain the technique of the landscape, at this time.

But the landscape took precedence over

the traditional tendency to portraiture and rose to quite new heights when the Romantic movement developed shortly after the year 1800. Prominent then are the names of Rethel, Kaulbach, Genelli, Führich, Cornelius, and Schwind. These Nature painters were much like the Romantic poets in character. They could put Stimmung and Gefühl on canvas because they themselves were sensitive.

"Ihre Seelen wiegten wie feine Gräser im Winde, ihr Geist war kühl wie Mondschein und ohne Schatten."¹³

The greatest painter of this period is Arnold Böcklein.

"Of Böcklein it may be said.....that he, as no one before him, has revealed nature as one gigantic, irresistible striving for beauty, for color, for light, for variety of forms, for perfection of types."¹⁴ -- "Here (in Böcklein's painting) the line dividing man and Nature has been effaced entirely."¹⁵

The Berlin, Heidelberg, and Swabian schools of Romantic writers led the movement in literature, and the authors of Heimatkunst, like Ludwig Thoma, have carried many of the elements up to modern times.

I myself evaluate the best of Romanticism as highly as Dr. Silz of Harvard, and I place

the Romantic artists in a place of similarly high worth. Since the Romantic movement died away, I think both German art and literature have suffered. Most of the works of Impressionism and Expressionism seem to have but a transitory value. Certainly most of the works in the current (1931) exhibitions at Leipzig, Berlin, and Dresden tend to mediocrity, while the worth of the ultra-modern trend remains to be established.

Such is the rough parallel of Nature in Art and in Letters.

e. Attitude toward Nature

A very convenient and authoritative way to sum up the German view of Nature neatly is to repeat what Kuno Francke wrote:

"Dumb nature and animal life.....is worthy of loving consideration and interest, all is part of one great living whole, in it all there is felt the breath of the infinite spirit, the restless striving of the universal line for completeness of existence."¹⁶

This is not learned by the German; it is born in him.

II. Different Aspects of Nature in Literature

a) Religious

The old Germanic peoples, like every primitive race, had a pantheistic theology. It was the natural and easiest way to explain existence, to ascribe calamities to unfavorable gods and benefactions to helpful ones. A god lived in each object--in sticks, stones, leaves, or storms.

When Christianity spread over the world, the pantheistic belief began to be supplanted by the monotheistic one. No longer was man a plaything of the gods, nor need one longer find a new fear at every turn. Whereas a dark cloud, a bug, or a flood had been a spirit, now men like Berthold von Regensburg taught that there was one god, a veritable Mussolini of the universe, who had created both Nature and Man. Martin Luther modified this stern conception by his doctrine of salvation through faith alone. Kant upheld the idea, later, with his three postulates of freedom, immortality, and God, but he gave Man new power over Nature by means of the categorical imperative, which left only Conscience to guide the individual. Romanticism revived the pantheistic religious view by Gefühl; Classicism had done so by the Greek tradition. Then the supreme Power fades away in German literature, for the modern trend is concerned with social conflicts, and it emphasizes free-will to the exclusion,

sometimes, or almost everything else.

These lines are only a general sketch; a single consistent conception of God and His relation to Nature can rarely be found in one author. Goethe and Schiller are excellent examples of this confusion. In Goethe we find the following passage:

"Ihr Götter, die mit flammender Gewalt
Ihr schwere Wolken aufzugeben wandelt
Und gnädigernst den lang erflachten Regen
Mit Donnerstimmen und mit Windesbrausen
In wilden Strömen auf die Erde schüttet;
Denn bald der Menschen grausenues Erwarten
In Segen auflöst und das bange Staunen
In Freudeblick und lauten Dank verwandelt,"¹⁷
u.s.w.

And again:

"Es fürchte die Götter
Das Menschengeschlecht"¹⁸

"Sie schreiten vom Berge
Zu Berge hinüber."¹⁹

In some of the most beautiful lines of Goethe's great Romantic work, Faust says:

"Erhabner Geist, du gabst mir, gabst mir alles,
Warum ich bat. Du hast mir nicht umsonst
Dein Angesicht im Feuer zugewendet.
Gabst mir die herrliche Natur zum Königreich,

Kraut, sie zu fühlen, zu geniessen. Nicht
Kalt staunenden Besuch erlaubst du nur,
Vergönne mir, in ihre tiefe Brust,
Wie in den Busen eines Freundes, zu schauen.
Du führst die Reihe der Lebendigen
Vor mir vorbei, und lehrst mich meine Brüder
Im stillen Busch, in Luft und Wasser kennen."²⁰

Then to Gretchen's simple question, "Glaubst du an Gott?"²¹,
Faust replies:

"Nenn's Glück! Herz! Liebe! Gott!
Ich habe keinen Namen
Dafür! Gefühl ist alles."²²

The young Werther, in his Romantic Pantheism, writes:--

"Eine wunderbare Heiterkeit hat meine ganze
Seele eingenommen, gleich den süßen Frühlings-
morgen, die ich mit ganzem Herzen genieße. Ich
bin allein und freue mich meines Lebens in
dieser Gegend, die für solche Seelen geschaffen
ist wie die meine. Wenn das liebe Tal
um mich dampfte, und die hohe Sonne an der Ober-
fläche der unaurchdringlichen Finsternis meines
Waldes ruht, und nur einzelne Strahlen sich in
das innere Heiligtum stehlen, ich dann im hohen
Grase am fallenden Bache liege, und näher an der
Erde tausend mannigfaltige Gräschen mir merk-

würdig werden; wenn ich das Wimmeln der kleinen
 Weit zwischen Halmen, die unzähligen, unergründlichen
 Gestalten der Würmchen, der Mückchen näher an
 meinem Herzen fühle, und fühle die Gegenwart des
 Allmächtigen, der uns nach seinem Bilde schuf, das
 Wehen des Allliebenden, der uns in ewiger Wonne
 schwebend trägt und erhält.....---dann sehn' ich
 mich oft...."23

Let us now observe that same confusion in Schiller:--

"Alles wies den eingeweihten Blicken,
 Alles eines Gottes Spur."24

"Diese Höhen füllten Oreaden,
 Eine Dryas lebt' in jenem Baum."25

"Nächst um ihn her mit mattem Strahl beschienen,
 Ein streitendes Gestaltenheer."26 (d.h., die Götter)

In the ballads Der Taucher and Die Kranische des Ibykus
 we see that the supreme powers may not be trifled with,
 for retaliation is prompt, and Nature--in the one case the
 sea, in the other the cranes-- is the gods. Then there
 are these lines, which give a slightly different idea:

"Wenn die Wolken getürmt den Himmel schwärzen,
 Wenn dumpftosend der Donner hallt,
 Da, da fühlen sich alle Herzen
 In des furchtbaren Schicksals Gewalt."27

Thunder, for the Classicist, symbolizes Fate, which is the

great extra-mundane power--or God. Note what Wallenstein declares, who interprets the divine will by the stars:--

"Und wenn der Stern, auf dem du lebst und wohnst
Aus seinem Gleise tritt, sich brennend wirft
Auf eine nächste Welt und sie entzündet,
Du kannst nicht wählen, ob du folgen willst,
Fort reisst er dich in seines Schwungen Kraft
Samt seinen Ring und allen seinen Monden."²⁸

"Doch was geheimnisvoll bedeutend webt
Und bildet in den Tiefen der Natur,---
.....

--Die Kreise in den Kreisen, die sich eng
Und enger ziehn um die centralische Sonne--
D i e sieht das Aug' nur, das entsiegelte,
Der hellgebornen, heitern Joviskinder."²⁹

In Hebbel's Herodes und Mariamne and Schiller's Jungfrau von Orleans we find the strict belief that phenomena of Nature are controlled by an all-seeing God. The one case tells us of the Star of Bethlehem³⁰ which brought the Three Wise Men together, and the other tells us of a glorious rainbow,³¹ a divine sign of forgiveness, praise, and promise of eternal happiness. Schiller, too, in general, subjects Nature to one powerrul

God, as in Die Worte des Glaubens:--

"Und ein Gott ist, ein heiliger Wille lebt,
Wie auch der menschliche wanke;
Hoch über der Zeit und dem Raume webt
Lebendig der höchste Gedanke.
Und ob alles in ewigem Wechsel kreist,
Es beharret im Wechsel ein ruhiger Geist."³²

Schiller, conscious of the element of change so important in Nature, has expressed the moral and ethical ideal tersely in an epigrammatic poem:--

"Suchst du das Höchste, das Grösste? Die Pflanze
kann es dich lehren.
Was sie willenlos ist, sei du es wollend--das
ist's!"³³

That immediately brings to mind Goethe's lines:--

"Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,
Inn können wir erlösen."³⁴

God has given us in Nature an example of the basis for the moral law. In this sense, and reasoning from here, "Nature is an infinitely divided God."³⁵ The Romantics also felt the truth of this. It is well summed-up in Lucinae:

"Um alles in eins zu fassen: je göttlicher ein Mensch oder ein Werk des Menschen ist, je ähnlicher werden sie der Pflanze; diese ist unter allen Formen der Natur die sittlichste und die schönste." ³⁶

b. Philosophical

There is not a tremendous amount of philosophizing in a general way about Nature in German literature. In Grillparzer's Weh dem, der lügt, one good bishop Gregor, without sufficient thought, explains:--

"....Freundschaft, Liebe, Mitgefühl
Und alle die Schönen Bande unsres Lebens,
Woran sind sie geknüpft, als an das wahre Wort?
Wahr ist die ganze kreisende Natur." ³⁷

Walther von der Vogelweide, after cogitating upon Germany's ~~the~~ political situation, sings:--

"Ich sah die Dinge dieser Welt,
Wald, Laub und Rohr und Gras und Feld,
Was kriechet oder flieget,
Was Bein zur Erde bieget,
Das sah ich und ich sag' euch das:
Da lebt nicht eines ohne Hass.
Das Wild und das Gewürme,
Die streiten starke Stürme,
So auch die Vögel unter sich,
Doch tun sie eins einmütiglich:

Sie schaffen stark Gerichte,
 Sonst wurden sie zunichte;
 Sie wählen Kön'ge,ordnen Recht
 Und unterscheiden Herrn und Knecht."³⁸

In the second part of Faust, there is an argument, unsettled, as to the composition of our world, whether it is of air, earth, fire, or water, the four medieval elements; also as to whether evolution began with the ocean as its source.³⁹ The indolent Taugenichts does his philosophizing in song:--

"Den lieben Gott lass' ich nur walten;
 Der Bächlein, Lerchen, Wald und Feld
 Und Era' und Himmel will erhalten,
 Hat auch mein' Sach' aus Best' bestellt!"⁴⁰

The question of why Nature exists and what it has done for humanity finds various answers in German literature. Schiller, like Grillparzer, explains that Nature was Truth for the primitive:--

"Was erst, nachdem Jahrtausend verflossen,
 Die alternde Vernunft erfand,
 Lag im Symbol des Schönen und des Grossen
 Voraus geoffenbart dem kindischen Verstand."⁴¹

Farther along in the same poem Schiller asserts that Art sprung from Nature:--

"Die Auswahl einer Blumenflur,
 Mit weiser Wahl in einen Strauss gebunden,
 So trat die erste Kunst aus der Natur."⁴²

And Wagner's Walther says he learned the art of song
from the splendor of Nature:--

"im Walde dort auf der Vogelweid',
da lernt' ich auch das Singen."⁴³

Goethe gives us the Classical explanation of
Nature, namely, that it hides the gods from earthly
folk:--

"Denn ihr allein wisst, was uns frommen kann,
Und schaut der Zukunft ausgedehntes Reich,
Wenn jedes Abends Stern- und Nebelhülle
Die Aussicht uns verdeckt."⁴⁴

For the Romanticists, who longed for Death,
"Life is only a colorful reflection of eternity.
"Alles Sichtbare hat nur die Wahrheit einer Allegorie;"
"Gott erblicken wir nicht, aber überall erblicken wir
Göttliches."⁴⁵ In Lucinde we read:--

"Denn ich glaubte einen tiefen Blick
in das Verborgene der Natur zu tun; ich
fühlte, dass alles ewig lebe und dass der
Tod auch freundlich sei und nur eine
Täuschung."⁴⁶

The Neo-Romantic is firmly convinced that Nature was
created for the active, among whom he perpetually longs
to be:--

"...die wilden Bienen sind
 Um sie, und Gottes helle, heisse Luft.
 Es gab Natur sich ihnen zum Geschäfte,
 In allen ihren Wünsche quillt Natur,
 Im Wechselspiel der frisch und müden Kräfte
 Wird ihnen jedes warmen Glückes Spur."⁴⁷

The Naturalist and the modern writers do not meditate so much about Nature, but simply feel that its presence is a relief from strain at critical moments of life. Thus Mann's Leutnant Gusti murmurs "Doch besser im Freien"⁴⁸, and seeks the open air during what he truly expects will be his last night on this earth. The exceedingly long treatise on Life and Nature in Mann's Zauberberg denotes the Verfall of the individual, and evolution and progress for the whole.

c) Economic and political

As one might expect, there are no great economic or political works on Nature to be found, unless one cares to classify scientific research here. Then we should record the names of men like Kepler, Liebig, Helmholtz, Kirchhoff, Weissmann, Koch, Ohm, and von Humboldt. But strictly economic and political writings have more weight in history than in letters. It suffices, I think, to point out where to look for these works.

After every war follows a period of reorganization and reconstruction to bring back the national health. Thus a nation becomes conscious of the importance of conserving its national resources. Germany was fearfully exhausted after the Thirty Years' war, which lasted from 1618 to 1648. Untiring administrators like Frederick the Great, who took office in 1740, worked hard to build her up. Other wars such as Napoleon's campaign, the Austro-Prussian war in 1866, the Franco-Prussian war in 1870 all drained Germany's national wealth. It was the part of wise economists and legislators to establish a policy of conservation of forests, water-power or water-ways, and ores. Bismarck and the exile of Doorn, the recent Kaiser Wilhelm II, must be included in this list of far-sighted men. The bodily evidence lies before the eyes of the traveler---if he be not a typical American one like Joseph Hergesheimer⁴⁹, for he sees young trees planted where old ones were cut down, taxes on standing timber lowered, for example--which are national necessities that America does not yet comprehend; the documentary evidence lies in the German political archives. Some very fine articles on the Ruhrgebiet, however, are frequently to be seen in the newspapers.

d.) Nature as scene

A much more satisfactory result comes from the examination of Nature as scene in German

literature. Simple descriptive passages are common, such as that about the old toll-house in Taugenichts,⁵⁰ the Italian picture which opens L'Arrabbiata, the sea in Tonio Kröger,⁵¹ and Immenensee in Springtime.⁵² These make no special effort to impart feeling, but merely record the situation as it was, in contrast to conscious attempts to give mood, which I shall take up later.

There are many scenes in German literature in the open country: When Siegeband takes home his wife, in the Gudrun, we read:--

"Bedeckt allenthalben bei den Wegen war
Das Gras und auch die Blumen von des Volkes
Schar.
Es war die Zeit, da Blätter wonniglich ent-
springen,
Und die Vögel allerhand ihre Weise im Wald
am Besten singen."⁵³

And now in the Nibelungenlied:--

"Sie fügten ihre Hände in eins und gingen
dann
Zu einem weiten Saale, der war gar wohl-
getan,
Vor dem die Donau unten die Flut vorüber-
goss.
Da sassen sie im Freien und hatten Kurz-
weile gross."⁵⁴

Friederich sprawls in the meadow⁵⁵ in Nuremberg in Hoffmann's delightful story of Meister Martin, and those same meadows are the setting for the gorgeous singers' festival in Wagner's Meistersinger.⁵⁶ The opening of the second part of Faust reveals the hero in a Romantic "Anmutige Gegend". The little story "Der Schuss von der Kanzel" begins with a fall scene.

Forest scenes are very common indeed. I need cite only Otto Ludwig's "Der Erbrörster" with the hunting house, Imnensee, where Elizabeth and Reinhard get lost, the "Hochgebirg" scene of Faust, and the Classical "wild wood"⁵⁷ of Die Jungfrau von Orleans, which may be contrasted with the really primeval forest of Grillparzer's Weh dem, der lügt, (Act IV).

The linden tree is a characteristic feature of German life; Germany would not be Germany without music and a glass of beer under the fragrant lindens. Eva makes Walther hide under a linden in the Meistersinger.⁵⁸ There is a linden walk to the churchyard in Grete Minde.⁵⁹ Taugenichts frolics on the village green under the lindens,⁶⁰ and the farmers dance and sing under the lindens in Faust, for example.

The foreigner in Germany is immediately struck by the number of gardens he sees. Even a house literally the size of a hencoop must have a flower-garden, as well as Sans Souci. The Germans are born

landscape architects, and their love of gardens appears again and again in their literature, especially in Romantic works. There is Peter Schlemihl and Grete Minde.⁶² Of course one recalls "den alten im blauen Rock" working over the rose bushes in Zwischen Himmel und Erde; ⁶³ the bishop imparting ethical advice and instruction in the castle garden (Weh, dem, der lügt ⁶⁴); and Faust and Margaret together in two garden scenes.

Count M's garden is Werther's favorite spot ⁶⁵. It is fitting that we should meet the most Romantic person of all in a twilight Romantic garden---Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, who dreams of Nathalie. ⁶⁶ Schiller offers a garden scene with just as strong an appearance in the Classical manner--a garden with a broad outlook on the sea. ⁶⁷ In Maria Stuart ⁶⁸ comes a formal, artificial park setting. In the foreground is a row of trees, and in the background a distant view, broad. How far removed is this from Karl Schönheider's style, who writes of the high mountain country, of evergreen forests, sloping meadows, and rocky farm land! This contrast in Nature setting helps to enlarge the distance between figures like Iphigenie, full of "edle Einfachkeit und stille Grösse", ⁷⁰ and the "rough, tough, and nasty" Hannes, who obstinately keeps bellowing at intervals, "Mir geht ja nix ab! I hab' mein' Arbeit....und mein Ess'n.... und mit den Hennen ins Bett....!" From Wilhelm Tell

we get a pleasanter impression of the mountains, it not so interesting a one.

e.) Nature as mood

Because the German soul is so close to Nature, the varied scenes which literature presents cannot be coldly regarded and studied in a purely intellectual way; they must also be felt--emotionally experienced. "Stimmung" is all-important in German works, and "Gefühl" must be cultivated. This requires a subjective instead of objective examination, so that the situation is intuitively appreciated; the reader must breathe the very air of the story and share whatever the characters undergo.

There are three outstanding types of Stimmung in German literature: Classic, Romantic, and Neo-Romantic. The trait that is common to all three is Sehnsucht, a yearning that perpetually wears away at the soul, like breakers on a sea beach. The Classic Stimmung is generally a quiet mood, in a gray, broad, setting. Hear the words that Maria Stuart pours forth:--

"O Dank, Dank diesen freundschaftlichen grünen Bäumen,
 Die meines Kerkers Mauern mir verstecken!
 Ich will mich frei und glücklich träumen,
 Warum aus meinem süßen Wahn mich wecken?
 Umfängt mich nicht der weite Himmelsschoss?
 Die Blicke, frei und fessellos,
 Ergehen sich in ungemessenen Räumen.
 Dort, wo die grauen Nebelberge ragen,
 Fängt meines Reiches Grenze an,
 Und diese Wolken, die nach Mittag jagen,
 Sie suchen Frankreichs fernem Ozean.

Eilende Wolken, Segler der Lüfte!
 Wer mit euch wanderte, mit euch schierte!
 Grüßet mir freundlich mein Jugendland!
 Ich bin gerungen, ich bin in Banden,
 Ach, ich hab' keinen andern Gesandten!
 Frei in Lüften ist eure Bahn,
 Ihr seid nicht dieser Königin untertan!" ⁷¹

Another example, par excellence, is the first speech of Goethe's Iphigenie, who stands by the temple in the sacred grove at the edge of the sea, and who, stretching out her arms toward her native land far away, exclaims:—

"Heraus in eure Schatten, rege Wipfel
 Des alten, heil'gen, dichtbelauben Haines,
 Wie in der Göttin stillen Heiligtum,
 Tret'ich noch jetzt mit schauerndem Gefühl,
 Als wenn ich sie zum erstenmal beträte,
 Und es gewöhnte sich nicht mein Geist hierher,
 So manches Jahr bewahrt mich hieverborgen
 Ein hoher Wille, dem ich mich ergebe;
 Doch immer bin ich, wie im ersten, fremd.
 Denn, ach! mich trennt das Meer von den Geliebten,
 Und an dem Ufer steh' ich lange Tage,
 Das Land der Griechen mit der Seele suchend;
 Und gegen meine Seufzer bringt die Welle
 Nur dumpfe Töne brausend mir herüber.
 Weh dem, der fern von Eltern und Geschwistern
 Ein einsam Leben führt! Ihm zehrt der Gram
 Das nächste Glück von seinen Lippen weg;
 Ihm schwärmen abwärts immer die Gedanken
 Nach seines Vaters Hallen...".u.s.w.⁷²

There is a very profitable contrast to be
 made here between Iphigenie and Grillparzer's Romantic
 Melitta, who longs in a different way:--

"O weit, sehr weit!

Von andern Bäumen war ich dort umgeben,

Und andre Blumen dursteten umher,

In blauen Lüften glänzten schönre Sterne,

Und freundlich gute Menschen wohnten dort."⁷³

Iphigenie stands in Diana's sacred grove;
Melitta, by an altar of Aphrodite. Instead of the
sombre Classical ocean background, a cheerful, smiling
sea sparkles beyond the shore, and rose bushes bloom
near at hand.

Many things together make the Romantic
Stimmung. Among these are music, flowers, twilight,
mist, moonbeams, fragrance, and beautiful women; also
there is extreme happiness and longing and loneliness,
sometimes all together. We can find a very good
specimen of the pure joy mood in Walther von der
Vogelweide:--

"Unter der Linden,

Ander Heide,

Wo ich mit meinem Trauten sass,

Da mögt ihr finde,

Wie wir beide

Die Blumen brachen und das Gras,

Vor dem Wald mit süßem Schall,

Tandaradei,

Sang im Tal die Nachtigall."⁷⁴

The despairing note we can get from Heine:--

"Und wüssten's die Blumen, die kleinen,
Wie tief verwundet mein Herz,
Sie würden mit mir weinen,
Zu heilen meinen Schmerz.

Und wüssten's die Nachtigallen,
Wie ich so traurig und krank,
Sie liessen fröhlich erschallen
Erquickenden Gesang.

Und wüssten sie mein Wehe,
Die goldnen Sternelein,
Sie kämen aus ihrer Höhe,
Und sprächen Trost mir ein.

Die alle können's nicht wissen,
Nur Eine kennt meinen Schmerz:
Sie hat ja selbst zerrissen,
Zerrissen mir das Herz." 75

The Romantic qualities of a Heidelberg summer
are proverbial:--

"Dann wurde es Abend, das Schloss drüben
am Berge tauchte in die Schatten der Nacht,

in den Häusern von Heidelberg jenseits des Neckars wurden Lichter angezündet, und nun steckten Herr Rüder und die Corpsdiener die Lampions an, die über allen Tischen baumelten, in den Bäumen und an der Ufermauer schaukelten, dass ihr bunt und das Bunt der Mützen und das helldurchstrahlte Grün der Büsche eine leuchtende Farbensymphonie ergaben." ⁷⁵

Here is another fair illustration:-

"Eine Nachtigall schlug in dem alten Birnbaume über ihr, so wunderbar und wie gewalttätig innig und tief. Vom Georgenturm bliesen vier Po-saunen den Abendchoral. Über ihnen und wie von ihren schwellenden Tönen getragen fuhr Apollonius auf seinem leichten Schiffe." ⁷⁶

The indolent Taugenichts, who sleeps on the threshold of the tollhouse, is quite at home anywhere in the open. This is what he says:--

"Die Nacht war warm, die Blumenbeete vor dem Hause dufteten lieblich, eine Wasserkunst weiter unten im Garten plätscherte immerfort dazwischen. Mir träumte von himmelblauen Blumen, von schönen, dunkelgrünen, einsamen Gründen, wo Quellen rauschten und Bächlein gingen und bunte Vögel wunderbar sangen, bis

ich endlich fest einschlief." 77

The Neo-Romantic Stimmung is one of decay, decline, or dying things; there is a longing for Life by those who do not know how to live it.

"Wenn nach dem schwülen Abend Regen kam
Und wir am Fenster standen--ah, der Duft
Der nassen Bäume!--Alles das ist hin,
Gestorben, was daran lebendig war!" 78

Observe Tonio Kröger's world, the second day of his return to his native town after a long absence:

"Wohin ging er? Er wusste es kaum.
Es war wie gestern. Kaum, dass er sich
wieder von diesem wunderbarlich würdigen
und unvertrauten Beieinander von Giebeln,
Türmchen, Arkaden, Brunnen umgeben sah,
kaum dass er den Druck des Windes, des
starken Windes, der ein zartes und herbes
Aroma aus fernen Träumen mit sich führte,
wieder im Angesicht spürte, als es sich
ihm wie Schleier und Nebelgespinnst um die
Sonne legte...." 79

German authors are very skillful ^{in the} ~~to~~ use of
Nature not only to arouse Stimmung in others,
but ⁱⁿ ~~to~~ using Nature's brush to paint with a few

broad colors the whole tone of a scene--there is a difference between these two purposes. Melancholy or cheerfulness might be painted, or a note with an ominous effect struck, this way. When Phaon and Sappho are to celebrate the honors of the poetess together, the fact that the retinue carries wreaths and flowers lends the fitting festive air.⁸⁰

In Mann's works there always seems to be a weary note of tired loneliness and damp desolation:--

"Die Wintersonne stand nur als armer Schein, milchig und matt hinter Wolken-schichten über der engen Stadt. Nass und zugig war's in den giebeligen Gassen, und manchmal fiel eine Art von weichem Hagel, nicht Eis, nicht Schnee."⁸¹

Or again:--

"Er geht die Allee hinauf, über die Brücke und jenseits ein Stück flussaufwärts, die Uferpromenade entlang bis zur übernächsten Brücke. Es ist nasskalt und schneit zuweilen etwas." "Er ventiliert ... dann und wann seine Lunge tief mit der winterlichen Abendluft."⁸²

Just by Schönheer's choice of Erde for a title, we know we shall expect an atmosphere of steaming soil and perspiration in the play. Here is a sad use for the same word:--

"The earth clutches for him, it reaches out after him, as with hands; the yellow, thick clay sticks to his shoes and makes his steps heavy, as though the dead would drag him, the survivor, down to themselves.

He is running over the black fields or craters. The wind is growing stronger, the clouds are drawing fast and occasionally the moon pours its pale light over the landscape." ⁸³

Observe the contribution of Night in the following excerpt:--

"Aber oft auch ist es Nacht, Immer wieder ist es Nacht. Und dann springen die Stunden, rot und schwarz, nicht mehr aus der Kirchturmuhre wie die Krampasse. Der Kirchturm steht nicht da. Aber vor allen Toren, die ganze Strasse entlang, sind Aschenbütten aufgestellt. Asche ist hingestreut überall. Fiala hält Wacht. Schwer, entsetzlich angstvoll lastet der Berehl auf seinem Herzen. " ⁸⁴

Hauptmann, like Shakespeare, presents a battle of the elements when momentous things are about to transpire.⁸⁵ Schiller, with great artistry, employs Nature to intensify the mood of suspense before dreadful revelations come forth:--

(aufmerksam)

"Horch, der lieben Stimme Schall!

--Nein, es war der Widerhall

Und des Meeres dumpfes Brausen,

Das sich an den Ufern bricht.

Der Geliebte ist es nicht!

Weh mir! Weh mir! Wo er weilet?

Mich umschlingt ein kaltes Grausen.

Immer tiefer

Sinkt die Sonne! Immer öder

Wird die Ode! Immer schwerer

Wird das Herz--wo zögert er?

(sie geht unruhig herum)⁸⁶

f) Nature affecting-
1) Characters

Often in literature it is found that Nature has a strong influence on characters. In Grete Minde, for instance, the school children troop out to celebrate the coming of the merry May. The very beauty of the Lorenzwald at this

time of year gets them to singing,

"Habt ihr es nicht vernommen?

Der Lenz ist angekommen!"⁸⁷

That explains why the Wandervögel today carry guitars or mouth-organs with them wherever they go, and sing or play as they stroll afield under sunny skies.

The "trüber Tag" only deepens the deep agitation into which Faust is plunged when his better instincts are fighting within him. Taugenichts expresses this external influence nicely:--

"Der Himmel war rot, die Vögel sangen
lustig in allen Wäldern, die Täler waren
voller Schimmer, aber in meinem Herzen war
es noch viel tausendmal schöner und fröh-
licher."⁸⁸

The old warrior Kottwitz, one of Kleist's most delightful characters, exclaims, in the early morning of the battle day:--

"Ein schöner Tag, so wahr ich Leben
atme!

Ein Tag, von Gott, dem hohen Herrn
der Welt,

Gemacht zu süßern Ding, als sich zu schlagen!
Die Sonne schimmert rötlich durch die
Wolken,
Und die Gefühle flattern mit der Lerche
Zum heitern Duft des Himmels jubelnd auf!" 89

Just as Nature creates Stimmung for the more perfect appearance of a character, it also, through the agency of certain phenomena, defines the personal make-up. The flowers which Gretchen brings when she prays to the Mater Dolorosa in Faust show that, despite her sin and misfortune, hers is basically a soul of freshness and purity. These lines from Schiller give the keynote to the character of Isabella and her sons, Don Manuel and Don Cesar:--

"Schön ist des Mondes
Mildere Klarheit
Unter der Sterne blitzendem Glanz;
Schön ist der Mutter
Liebliche Hoheit
Zwischen der Söhne feuriger Kraft;
Nicht auf der Erden
Ist ihr Bild und ihr Gleichnis zu sehn.
Hoch auf des Lebens
Gipfel gestellt,

Schliesst sie blühend den Kreis des Schönen,
Mit der Mutter und ihren Söhnen
Krönt sich die herrlich vollendete Welt." 90

2) Authors

There are times when the feelings of authors seem to carry them along a bit. If they happen to be susceptible in that way, they usually write about the same subjects a good deal. That is how we happen to associate Walther von der Vogelweide with Spring, Thomas Mann with cold North German rain, Wackenroder with "der mondbeglänzten Sommernacht", and Novalis with Night.

g) Nature and the personality

The general impression of what Nature has done for the German personality I can best express by saying that it has given it, at the least, sincerity, faith, and a childlike optimism. There emanates from such personalities a frankness and freshness which only this little line from Maria Stuart reveals:--

"Lass mich ein Kind seinⁿ, sei es mit!" 91

Perhaps because the only object which can rival Nature's charm is a beautiful woman we come to

associate the two. Read again Walther's Frauen
preis, the first stanza of which runs:--

"Durchsüsset und geblümet sind die reinen
Frauen:
So Wonngliches gab es niemals anzuschauen
In Lüften noch auf Erden, noch in allen
grünen Auen.
Lilien oder Rosenblumen, wenn sie
blicken
Im Maien durch betautes Gras, und kleiner
Vögel Sang
Sind gegen solche Wonnen farblos, ohne Klang,
Wenn man ein schönes Weib erschaut. Das
kann den Sinn erquicken,
Und wer an Kummer lide, wird augen-
blicks gesund,
Wenn lieblich lacht in Lieb' ihr süsser roter
Mund,
Ihr glänzend Auge Pfeile schiesst in Mannes-
Herzensgrund."

E.T.A. Hoffmann presents his Rosa in this fashion:--

"Denk' an den edeln, zarten Wuchs, an
die schön gewölbte, lilienweisse Stirn, an das
Inkarnat, das wie Rosenhauch die Wangen über-
liegt, an die reinen, kirschrot brennenden

Lippen, an das in frommer Sehnsucht hinschau-
ende Auge, von unller Wimper halb verhängt
wie Mondestrahl von düstern Laube---denk' an
das seidne Haar, inzierlichen Flechten kunst-
reich aufgenestelt---denk' an alle Himmels-
schönheit jener Jungfrauen und du schauest
die holde Rosa." 92

Schiller, the Classicist, has told this
relation of Nature and woman very prettily in two
lines:--

"Ehret die Frauen! sie flechten und weben
Himmlische Rosen ins irdische Leben." 93

n.) Meanings of phenomena

There are four single phenomena of Nature
which are worthy of notice, since one encounters
them again and again. They are: the sun, the moon,
the stars, the night. These impart totally different
sentiments to different authors.

In the Prolog im Himmel of Faust, the sun
signifies eternity:--

(Raphael)

"Die Sonne tönt nach alter Weise
In Brudersphären Wettgesang,
Und ihre vorgeschriebene Reise
Vollendet ~~ist~~ sie mit Donnergang.

hören, an das in frommer Sehnsucht hinschau-
ende Auge, von dunkler Wimper halb verhängt
wie Mondstrahl von düsterm Laube---denk' an
das selbne Haar, in derlichen Elechten Kunst-
reich aufgenestelt---denk' an alle Himmels-
schönheit jener Jungfrauen und du schauest
die holde Rosa."

Schiller, the Classicist, has told this
relation of Nature and woman very prettily in two
lines:--
"Erst die Trauer! sie flechten und weben
Himmliche Rosen ins irdische Leben."

h) Meanings of phenomena

There are four single phenomena of Nature
which are worthy of notice, since one encounters
them again and again. They are: the sun, the moon,
the stars, the night. These impart totally different
sentiments to different authors.
In the Prolog im Himmel of Faust, the sun
signifies eternity:--

(Raphael)

"Die Sonne tönt nach alter Weise
In Brudersphären Westgang,
Und ihre vorgeschriebne Reise
Vollendet sie mit Donnergang."

Ihr Anblick gibt den Engeln Stärke,
Wenn keiner sie ergründen mag;
Die unbegreiflich hohen Werke
sind herrlich wie am ersten Tag." 94

Iphigenie considers the sunbeams as the finest of God's
gifts to us on earth, for does she not cry out in
gratefulness--

"Gottene Sonne, leihe mir
Die schönsten Strahlen, lege sie zum Dank
Vor Jovis Thron!" 95

To the weary Neo-Romantic the sun itself is like:--

"Ich hab' mich so an Künstliches verloren,
Dass ich die Sonne sah aus toten Augen." 96

And the setting sun, instead of cheering with its colors,
calls to mind for him only decay and solitude, and the
dying of existence, like the falling leaves in Cyrano de
Bergerac.

The stars, which turn the minds of men toward
infinity, always bring God closer. Truth and eternity
sparkle in their firm light; a contagious confidence comes
from them.

"Seid umschlungen, Millionen!
Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!
Bruder--überm Sternenzelt
Muss ein lieber Vater wohnen." 97

Curiously enough, ~~the~~ moon offers six different usages. One expects moonbeams with romance, of course---"Mondschein, Verlobung, Lieutenants und was weiss' ich!"⁹⁸ The purity of the moon that Faust sees may have something to do with that conception.⁹⁹ At any rate, Sehnsucht is the affliction--of the chronic variety--or those who moongaze, and it is not necessarily the longing or love:--

"Die Mondesschimmer fliegen,
Als säh' ich unter mir
Das Schloss im Tale liegen,
Und ist doch so weit von hier!"¹⁰⁰

Anything unusual about the moon seems to bring foreboding with it, or precede an occurrence of the greatest moment. Such is the case in Wilhelm Tell, or Schiller's; when two moon-rings form:--

"(Meier)

Was denn?--Ja wahrlich!
Ein Regenbogen mitten in der Nacht!

(Melchtal)

Es ist das Licht des Mondes, das ihn bildet.

(Von der Flüe)

Das ist ein ¹seitsam wunderbares Zeichen!
Es leben viele, die das nicht gesehn."¹⁰¹

A red moon, such as in Faust, has an evil portent always. Mephistopheles himself exclaims:--

"Wie traurig steigt die unvollkommne Scheibe
Des roten Monds mit später Glut heran." ¹⁰²

In Schiller's Leichenphantasie the moon acquires a dread, ghastly significance:--

"Mit erstorbnem Scheinen
Steht Der Mond auf totenstillen Hainen,
Seufzend streicht der Nachtgeist durch
die Luft."

Last of all let us regard the Night. There are four main attitudes to ard it, although the shades of darkness are manifold. First is the view that night is Romantic, which Friedrich Schlegel's Julius well puts into words:--

"Nur in der Nacht singt Klagen," sprach
Julius, "die kleine Nachtigall und tiere
Seufzer." ¹⁰³

Next, Night, as refuge, may bring with it relief for the sore oppressed in spirit:--

"Ich wankte durch die Strassen zum Tor
hinaus, ins Feld. Manchmal fiel mich die
Verzweiflung an, dann kam aber wieder Hoffnung." ¹⁰⁴

in the early works, like the Gudrun or Nibelungenlied.¹⁰⁶ I present only two ~~####~~ similes, both Schiller's, which are striking:--

"Ach, in des Kerkers feuchter Finsternis
M u s s er erkranken--Wie die Alpenrose
Bleicht und verkümmert in der Sumpfesluft,
So ist es für i h n kein Leben als im
Licht
Der Sonne, in dem Balsamstrom der Lürte."¹⁰⁷

"Unermessliches
Geschütz ist aufgebracht von allen Enden,
Und wie der Bienen dunkelnde Geschwader
Den Korb umschwärmen in des Sommers Tagen,
Wie aus geschwärzter Luft die Heuschreck-
wolke
Herunterfällt und meilenlang die Felder
Beudeckt in unabsehbarem Gewimmel,
So goss sich eine Kriegeswolke aus
Von Völkern über Orleans' Gerilde."¹⁰⁸

Heinrich von Kleist I want to point out as a master of metaphor. He has a technical trick of carrying on for some little space the figure he has chosen. He gives us three notable examples in

Prinz Friederich: where Hohenzollern calls his page a "Cikade", where Nathalie pictures the Prince as "meines Glückes Rebe", and where Arthur terms himself "die Pflanze".⁴⁰⁹

Nature parallels are very common in didactic literature based on the Bible and in the cycle of the beast epic. Fables like the hen and the pearls, the crane and the wolf, the fox and the lamb⁷¹⁰ are every bit as familiar to the Germans as to us. It is not by mere chance that Mickey Mouse is even more beloved in Germany than in America today.

j. Nature symbolism

Although we understand many conventional Nature symbols like Friederich von Hardenberg's "blaue Blume", the history of many is uncertain. They are apt to be skeuomorphic in character, and as little understood as our term "Commencement Day", for example, or the meaning of the traditional hoop-rolling contests at leading women's colleges. Since the subject is so complicated in itself, I merely offer a short list of interesting Nature symbols for perusal:--

Night	equivalent to.....eternity	111
Sun.....	equivalent to.....eternity	112
Pearls.....	equivalent to.....the virtuous woman	113
Cherry tree...	equivalent to.....own life,deep-rooted	114
Poplar tree...	equivalent to.....the aristocracy	115
Oak tree.....	equivalent to.....holiness	116
Palm tree.....	equivalent to.....Italy;Romantic	
Cypress tree..	equivalent to.....sadness	118
Wreath.....	equivalent to.....love	119
Laurel.....	equivalent to.....poetry	120
Myrtle.....	equivalent to....."Life"	121
Waterlily.....	equivalent to.....lost love	122
Rose.....	equivalent to.....love	123
Red mouse.....	equivalent to.....soul	124

Such symbolism,too,perhaps from Oriental sources,is met with in dreams,as when two eagles swoop upon a falcon.¹²⁵ The multiplicity of Nature symbols is very satisfactorily explained near the very close of Faust,when we read:--

"Alles Vergängliche
Ist nur ein Gleichnis."

III. Nature traced through the periods of German literature by the reading of significant works in each to indicate its weight and type of influence in each

This synthesis of spirit I intend to make in a way of my own invention. In an earlier part of this discussion, I dwelt somewhat upon German art; the purpose will now be apparent. I will make the necessarily dangerous venture of constructing, from as few chosen authors and works as possible, scenes with Nature elements, word pictures to represent the ages. This is like building a theoretical to compare with an actual.

To the year 1000

"Hildebrandslied"
"Old Saxon Genesis"

1) Here are two scenes to be drawn. One should reveal two intelligent-looking men of mighty physique, crudely armed and protected, fighting a duel to the death between two masses of horsemen gathered in a stony field at the edge of a virgin forest. The background for this must be exceedingly wild and rough.

2) The second picture shows three richly robed but poorly executed figures kneeling before a very Germanic-looking Christ-child and Mary, while the Star of Bethlehem gleams above with lined rays. The background a flat sweep with two camels far away heading for the distant hills.

To 1300

"Nibelungenlied"

"Parzival"

Walther von der Vogelweide's songs

1) In this first picture I shall draw, a powerful man is riding triumphantly at the head of a great retinue of knights, ladies, and servants. The pleasure of homecoming lightens his grim face. His lady rides a wee bit behind him, timidly. Overdrawn haws distorts the malicious features of several of his followers. The procession is wending its way toward a fortified castle that towers up beyond the river ford. The road, receding behind, disappears in a very thick wood, at the edge of which animals appear as dark splotches.

2) My second scene shows a group of linden trees, beneath which a minstrel is singing to a group of ladies. The sun is hot on the fields at the side, but the trees cast a cool shade over the greensward where the figures half-recline. The picture is crude, but realistic.

To 1500

"Reinke der Vos"

"Eulenspiegel" chapbook

Fastnachtspiele

1) First, a very rough pen-and-ink ~~sketch~~ sketch of a country bumpkin with a comic face lurking behind a scraggly hedge~~past~~ which two men are bearing a bee-hive. A rough woods background.

2) Another crude line-drawing of a wolf whose paws seem frozen in the ice of a small pond. A bleak

landscape. A fox, cleverly drawn, smirks as he watches from a nearby hill.

3) Five virgins in white robes stand stiffly in profile, while five other virgins with over-downcast faces stand opposite them. In the center between the two groups is a Christ with deep-lined face, and expressive hands, which are outstretched in exposition. The sky is gilt, the background flat and meaningless.

To 1624

"Bible", or Martin Luther
Hans Sachs collected writings

1) Here we can imagine Luther sitting at a desk in a little room with one great book laid out before him and utensils by its side; parchment and quills strewn about. In his ready hands he holds an inkwell, for a horrid-looking devil confronts him, leering from a dark corner of the room. Through the window one sees the Thüringer Wald, very realistically reproduced.

2) The other picture is that of a rather distracted appearing St. Peter in a village street. Geese are fluttering from him in several directions. A calm Christ stands at his elbow. Hans Sachs, sitting on a stool, smiles while he works, by the doorway of a little cobbler's shop. The detail is fine, and the whole a charming piece of realism.

To 1748

"Die Alpen"-v. Haller

1)) This presents a brightly colored mountain group of interior composition but good detail, in the flower and grass foreground. (This technique must cover the Second Silesian School, who cared how and not what they wrote.)

To 1848

"Wallenstein"-Schiller

"Iphigenie"-Goethe

~~"Werther"-Goethe~~

"Werther"-Goethe

1)) To cover the Sturm und Drang, we must have Werther sitting on the plow, in a lazy posture that belies the expression of active longing to be read in his face.

2)) For the Classic strain there must be a broad lawn high above the sea. The ocean waves are dashing against the beetling cliffs. A solitary gray-robed figure stands with one hand stretched toward the horizon in supplication. The sky is overcast with dark, scudding clouds.

(You will note that the third great figure of the Classical period, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, is not represented in my selection. That is because I could find almost nothing about Nature in his work--which it is my purpose to seek out. Where Lessing lays out the borders of poetry and painting, he approves landscapes, because those would be bodies in space. He actually

Condemns von Haller's Alpen, as it does not concern
events in time. ¹²⁶)

1800 to 1850 - The Romantic Strain

"Sappho"-Grillparzer

"Taugenichts"-von Eichendorff

"Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe"-Keller

1) Two views will give the kernel of the Romantic Period. One is a sunny landscape, where a brook winds through a meadow. Full green trees balance the scene. A carefree figure reclines on a bank in the sun, some young girls are playing farther off. Yellow butterlilies and blue flowers are scattered in profusion. The whole view is rendered soft by a kind of gentle haze, giving the effect of a fine photograph slightly blurred.

2) My other "painting" reveals a soft, dark, night landscape. Blue coloring suggests flowers and water. A lone figure silhouetted against the sky, raises its head in longing toward the moon, which streams down from the company of brilliant stars in silver radiance.

To 1932

"Der Tor und der Tod"-Hoffmannsthal

"Tonio Kröger"-Thomas Mann

A lonesome, black figure stands on a city corner, resisting the rain and driving wind, yet without an apparent objective. The yellow rays from a street-lamp show a timid and discouraged face, one obviously ill-at-ease in its surroundings.

1914

1915

Blocks of dark pigment heighten the despondency of the picture.

That is my attempt to unite, art with literature, by a synthesizing process which combines the practical and the theoretical. It is the most compact way I know to make a "vest-pocket survey" of the spirit of the centuries in German art and letters.

IV. Consideration of the most important Nature period

a) Romanticism

Up to now we have given Romanticism a pretty cursory inspection. But I wish to treat some of the Romantic writers by themselves, for the skillful use of Nature culminates with them. I am not alone in this belief. Kuno Francke, for instance, writes:---

"As for the German Romanticists,--- who has ^{descried} ~~descried~~ more persistently than they the restlessness and hasty shallowness of human endeavor? Who has sung more rapturously the praises of the deep, impenetrable, calm, unruffled working of nature, the abyss of silent, unmovable forces in whose brooding

there is contained the best and holiest of existence? "¹²⁷

Another critic, who testifies to the wonderful sympathy of the Romanticists with Nature, says:--

"Man kann sich den Romantiker wohl auf der Jagd über Berg und Tal, in verschwiegenen Waldesgründen und ~~im~~ im Dämmern der Dämmerung, aber eigentlich nie in der Enge seiner vier Wände vorstellen." ¹²⁸

Since Romanticism is defined in terms of Gefühl, it was to be expected that the men associated with this movement should excel in poetry. Friederich von der Leyen speaks of Nature's place in Romantic poetry in these words:--

"Die Romantik will wieder alles umfassen: die ganze Dichtung, zeitlich, räumlich, von ihren ersten Anfängen bis zu ihren vollendeten Darbietungen, die "progressive Universalpoesie", wie ^{es} Friedrich Schlegel nennt. Religion und Philosophie sind in dieser Dichtung beschlossen, und wer die Dichtung besitzt, der ahnt auch die Unbewusstheiten und Unterbewusstheiten unsres Daseins, Tod, Verklärung, Unsterblichkeit und die andern schöpferischen Mächte, und die tiefen Zusammenhänge von

Mensch und Natur." ¹²⁹

For August Wilhelm Schlegel Nature

meant Sehnsucht:--

"Einsam schweir' ich in die Felder,
Such' ein Echo der Natur;
Aber Bäche, Winde, Wälder
Rauschen fremd auf dieser Flur." ¹³⁰

There is always the insistent reminder of things from the past, and the indefinite yearning for the future. Friedrich's views we have already gathered sufficiently from Lucinde.

Next comes Ludwig Tieck, who is very fond of singing of the night.. That verb "singing" is used advisedly, because his verse has a musical quality which intensifies the sense of distance and Sehnsucht and ghostliness. There is the suggestion of a flowing brook in the cool evening shadows, in his poetry:--

"Im Windsgeräusch, in stiller Nacht
Geht dort ein Wandersmann,
Er seufzt und weint und schleicht
so sacht,
Und ruft die Sterne an:

Ihr kleinen goldnen Sterne,

Ihr bleibt mir ewig ferne,

Ferne,ferne,

Und ach! ich vertraut' euch so gerne."¹³¹

There is, then, a strong bond of companionship between Tieck and Novalis, the "poet of the night". Longing, distance, beauty, sadness, and infinitude are the notes of his chord:--

"Abwärts wend' ich mich zu der heiligen, unaussprechlichen, geheimnisvollen Nacht. Fernab liegt die Welt, in eine tiefe Gruft versenkt: wüst und einsam ist ihre Stelle. In den Saiten der Brust weht tiefe Wehmuth. Fernen der Erinnerung, Wünsche der Jugend, der Kindheit Träume, des ganzen langen Lebens kurze Freuden und vergebliche Hoffnungen kommen in grauen Kleidern, wie Abendnebel nach der Sonne Untergang."¹³²

Novalis has the Romantic longing for death, and he is filled with Jenseitigkeit. His poems are genuine; it is his soul that directs his pen.

Brentano, too, writes of the night, but not with the passion of Novalis. His is a lighter art, although brimmed with longing and melancholy, also. His Abenastanachen is worth reproducing:--

"Hör', es klagt die Flöte wieder,
Und die kühlen Brunnen rauschen,
Golden wehn die Töne nieder;
Stille, stille, lass uns lauschen!

Holdes Bitten, mild Verlangen,
Wie es süß zum Herzen spricht!
Durch die Nacht, die mich umringen,
Blickt zu mir der Töne Licht."¹³³

Joseph von Eichendorff, whom I regard as the most charming of all the Romanticists, always wrote with a religious touch to his verses, with a pure simplicity and faith. His Nature and his God are the child's--eternal, happy, and sympathetic. The poem Auf meines Kindes Tod clearly reveals the genuineness of his feeling:--

"Die Welt treibt fort ihr Wesen,
Die Leute kommen und gehn,
Als wärest du nie gewesen,
Als wäre nichts geschehn.

Wie sehn' ich mich aufs neue
Hinaus in Wald und Flur!
Ob ich mich gräm', mich freue,
Du bleibst mir treu, Nature.

Da klagt vor tieferm Sehnen
Schluchzend die Nachtigall,
Es schimmern rings von Tränen
Die Blumen überall.

Und über alle Gipfel
Und Blütentäler zieht
Durch stillen Waldes Wipfel
Ein heimlich Klagelied.

Da Spür' ich's recht im Herzen,
Dass du's, Herr, draussen bist---
Du weisst's, wie mir von Schmerzen
Mein Herz zerrissen ist!"¹³⁴

Adelbert von Chamisso, of the Second
Berlin School of Romanticists, imparts to us the
Stimmung of the freshness of Spring, the Spring
that brings happiness to waiting hearts: --

Rose, Rose, Knospe gestern
Schliefst du noch in moos'ger Hülle,
Heute prangst in Schönheitsrülle
Du vor allen deinen Schwestern.

Träumtest du wohl über Nacht
Von den Wundern, die geschahen,
Von des holden Frühlings Nahen
Und des jungen Tages Pracht?"¹³⁵

Now here is a very fine shade of per-

ception. Eduard Mörike, a Swabian poet, writes in a much more matter-of-fact way, and yet we feel that he is more absorbed in Stimmung than was Chamisso.

"Die Wolke seh' ich wandeln und den Fluss,
 Es dringt der Sonne goldner Kuss
 Mir tief bis ins Geblüt hinein;
 Die Augen, wunderbar ~~erschauet~~ *betrachtet*,
 Tun, als schliessen sie ein,
 Nur noch das Ohr dem Ton der Biene lauschet!"¹³⁶

Ludwig Uhland writes in many moods, and therefore ~~employs~~ employs Nature for many services. There is evening for An den Tod, the garden and the rose for Lauf der Welt, the holy oak in Freie Kunst; larks, fields, and forest can be found in great abundance in his poetry. Ruhetal is rather characteristic of him:--

"Wann im letzten Abendstrahl
 Goldne Wolkenberge steigen
 Und wie Alpen sich erzeigen,
 Frag' ich oft mit Thränen:
 "Liegt wohl zwischen jenen
 Mein ersehntes Ruhetal?"

Most of the Romanticists were touched by Welt-schmerz, but Nikolaus Lenau more than the others. It was more than just Jenseitigkeit. He always felt that he was out of place in this world no matter where he was or what he did. In pain he found a sympathizer.

"Man plötzlich wankt die Distel hin und wieder,
Und heftig rauschen bricht der Regen nieder,
Wie laute Antwort auf ein stummes Fragen.

Der Wanderer hört den Regen niederbrausen.
Er hört die wingereitschte Distel sausen,
Und eine Wehmut rührt er, nicht zu sagen."¹³⁷

The last Romanticist I shall mention is Heinrich Heine. Among his favorite figures are the moon, standing for Sehnsucht,¹³⁸ the nightingale, which sings of unrequited love,¹³⁹ and the lotus-flower, a token of that dreamland for which the Romanticists yearned.¹⁴⁰

Heine has often been given the credit for introducing the sea to German literature, with his Nordseebilder; but a minor writer named Müller had actually done this some years before. At any rate, Heine was the first to reproduce the spirit of the sea and popularize it.

To represent Heine here I have selected a poem called the Lotusblume. The Night, the delicate flower, the moon, infinity, and Sehnsucht are all united here:--

"Die Lotusblume ängstigt
Sich vor der Sonne Pracht,
Und mit gesenktem Haupte
Erwartet sie träumend die Nacht.

Der Mond, der ist ihr Buhle,
Er weckt sie mit seinem Licht,
Und ihn entschleiert sie freundlich
Ihr frommes Blumengesicht.

Sie blüht und glüht und leuchtet,
Und starret stumm in die Höh';
Sie duftet und weinet und zittert
Vor Liebe und Liebesweh." 141

b) Foreign influences

I think we may say that there were only two really outstanding Nature influences from foreign countries in German literature.

The first was a book called "The Seasons", written by Thompson. It was published in England, and was a purely descriptive work. Just as Milton's Paradise Lost paved the way for Klopstock and the Messias, so the Seasons opened the way for Albrecht von Haller's Die Alpen. This last book brought forth a deluge of inferior imitations immediately, long-winded descriptions carried out to the minutest details.

The other foreign influence came from France. It was the Rousseau urge to "get back to Nature". This wave was the leading factor that bolstered and then inflated the stock of the Roman-

tic movement in Germany. So strong was the Rousseau teaching that it has been carried even up to today, as the nudist cults testify.

V. The Part of Nature in the German Philosophies

Since philosophy mothers a literary brood, it would be well to cover very briefly Nature's part in German philosophy.

The Frenchman, Descartes, had based his hypotheses on the phenomenon of thought, but then he was at a loss to explain reality satisfactorily. Leibnitz advanced Descartes' ideas by his monadic theory, which proposed that mind and matter were not of very different stuff. This was at the beginning of the eighteenth century. When the Sturm und Drang set in, the doctrine of Rousseau spread very rapidly in Germany. Hamann and Herder were its chief ministers. They felt that instinct and feeling was more reliable than reason; they were Naturalists.

The main point which Kant, the bulwark of the Classical period, drove home was that we know Nature only through our sensations, which may be false and are certainly inconsistent. In other words, we cannot ever know the "Ding an sich". This tumbled the preceding philosophies in cruel fashion.

Kant thus opened the way for Fichte, a subjective idealist whom the Romanticists supported. Fichte said the world existed only in our minds, which laid the groundwork for Romantic Irony and the decline of the late stage of the great movement. Schelling varied this last philosophy somewhat by saying that both Man and Nature together compose one phase of the world mind. Hegel, a Romanticist also, was strongly influenced by the progress of the scientific world. His contribution was that the conflicts of Nature and Society should eventually become a complete harmony, (logical idealism).

The entire philosophy of our last figure, Schopenhauer, is indicated in the often-quoted sentence, "Die Welt ist meine Vorstellung". His objective idealism, minus the pessimistic strain, is quite popular among thinkers today.

(Nietzsche needs no discussion for my purpose because he took Kant for granted; social evolution was more his field of worry.)

VI. Summaries and Estimates

a) Peaks of excellence and declines

As far as Nature is concerned, it seems to me there are ~~three~~ ^{three} summits of attainment. The first is in the lyrical Classical Middle High German period, just before 1300; the second is in the Classical period, about 1800; the third and highest point is in the Romantic period about 1820. Heimatkunst, about 1925, is a lesser hill on the lower slopes. The deep dips near the peaks come about 1000, 1690, and 1920

b.) Importance

In my mind it bears tremendous weight to say that these peaks of excellence of Nature have risen up in the best periods of German literature. I do not, by any means, assert that making free use of Nature in writing will guarantee unaging fame. No, but it is significant that the best German authors have known how to employ Nature most skilfully in their technique to round out pictures or moods.

c.) Probable trend

As long as our social structure remains unsteady, it seems ~~not~~ reasonable to predict that Nature will be absent from the leading German works. When a time of stability and balance returns, Nature will do so in writing; for it expresses the best of

the German soul better than any other medium we know, except, perhaps, music. At this present time, however, Germany (and the entire world) is occupied with the process of adjustment in a modern Sturm und Drang. The problems of individual and group adaptation take the front of the stage. Since the proportions of this great maladjustment are so very much greater than history has ever witnessed before, the solution will be longer in coming forward than ever before. Few writers are able to keep aloof from the great contemporary forces of their times, so it is safe to predict that Nature will play a very small rôle in German literature for some time to come until the Gordian knot of human entanglements has been straightened out.

d) Value

Even after a comprehensive review of an element in literature, it still remains a most difficult task to evaluate it fairly. We have seen that Nature is so fundamental in the Germanscheme of things that its consideration cannot be omitted in any period. In the interpretation of German literature it holds such an important place that without it, many works would lose most of their meaning. Nature completes the pictures, it helps to create mood, it adds realism,

color, and life; it rounds out character interpretation and lays the appropriate scenes for various actions. It is the common denominator of the Germanic soul, and in its fullest expression, the Romantic movement, has spoken out much of the finest qualities of the German heart---sympathy, love, and sincerity. In the Middle Ages and then again, beginning soon after the time of Martin Opitz, Nature helped to save German literature from becoming artificial and hypocritical, even though, when carried to excess, it suffered its own era of decadence.

e) My own reaction to Nature in
German literature

Now that I have come to the close of my dissertation, let me briefly sum up the discussion.

I began by showing the importance of Nature to German life, pointed out its various aspects in literature, constructed with its help a picture to represent the spirit of all the great periods, considered it at its culmination--Romanticism--, showed its place in the German philosophies, and then made some generalizations about the data thus far accumulated. To this review it remains only

The first of these is the fact that the
government has been unable to secure
the necessary funds to carry out its
policy.

The second is the fact that the
government has been unable to secure
the necessary funds to carry out its
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The fourteenth is the fact that the
government has been unable to secure
the necessary funds to carry out its
policy.

for me to record my own impression which has been gathered by the investigation.

Nature, I believe, is the first thing to look at in the examination of anything Germanic. It is certainly necessary for a complete understanding, and it usually offers the key to appreciation. Among the effects which it has produced I think that two are outstanding: Beauty and Truth. These are the primitive feelings of a simple receptivity, and they seem to have swept along in German literature from the beginnings up to the present time. I believe that the lyrical outbursts of the Romanticists, especially the earlier ones, and those wherein Nature is most often called upon to express the soul within, are, as a class, the finest gems of German letters. This is, of course, a subjective decision, and such is my personal attitude. Where Nature has been employed to excess, as in the later history of the Romantic movement, I do not share the aversion of many critics toward it. It seems then like a concoction of too many sweets. The poems of Ludwig Uhland, for example, are delightful if one does not read too many in rapid succession; if so, they become tiring. The truly appreciative reader of Nature lit-

erature must be an intelligent connoisseur,
in the completest sense of the word. I
think that much of the eternal charm of
German literature lies in the Nature theme.
Perhaps the strong favorable prejudice I
have presented may be explained by the fact
that I am a Romanticist myself.

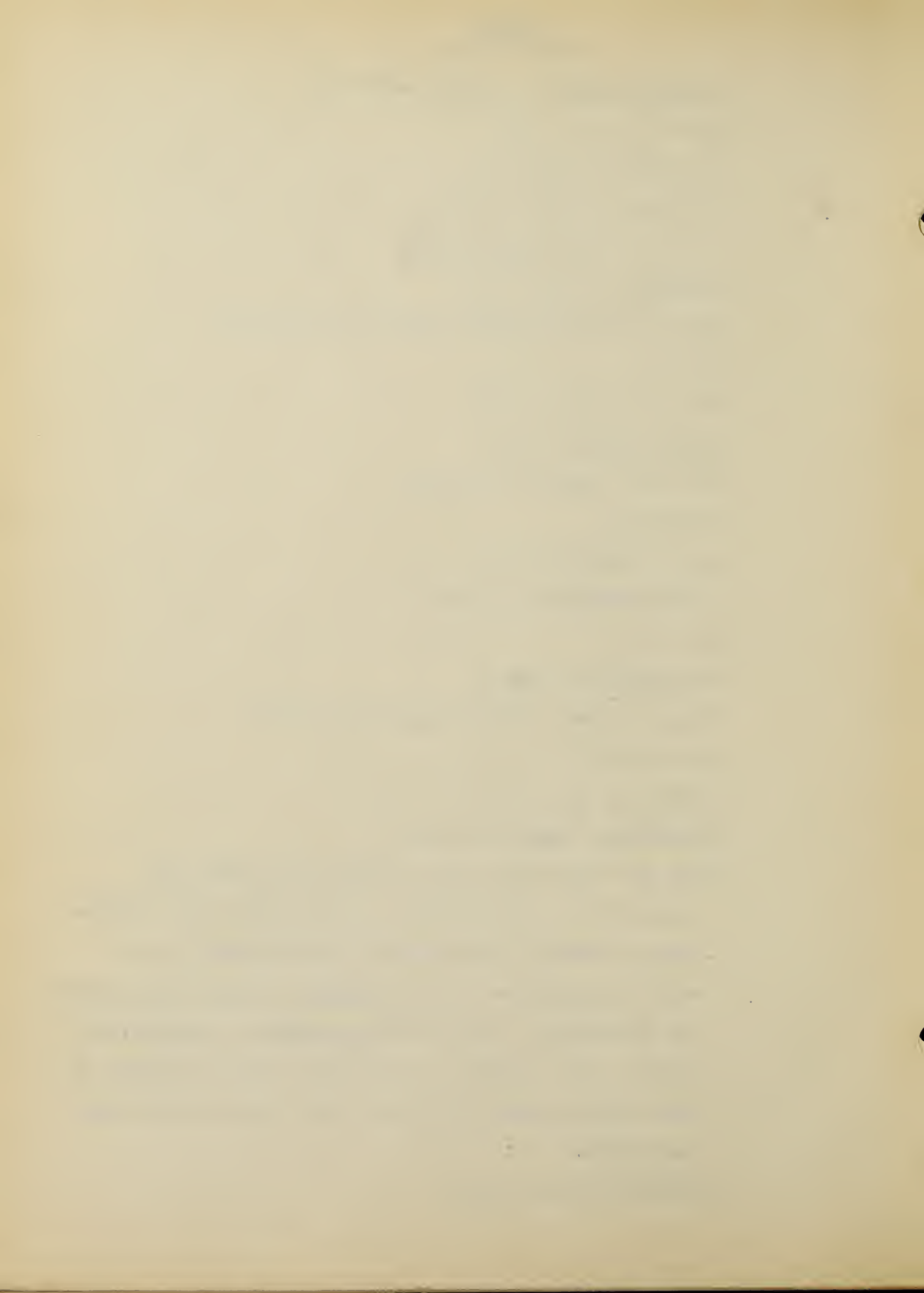
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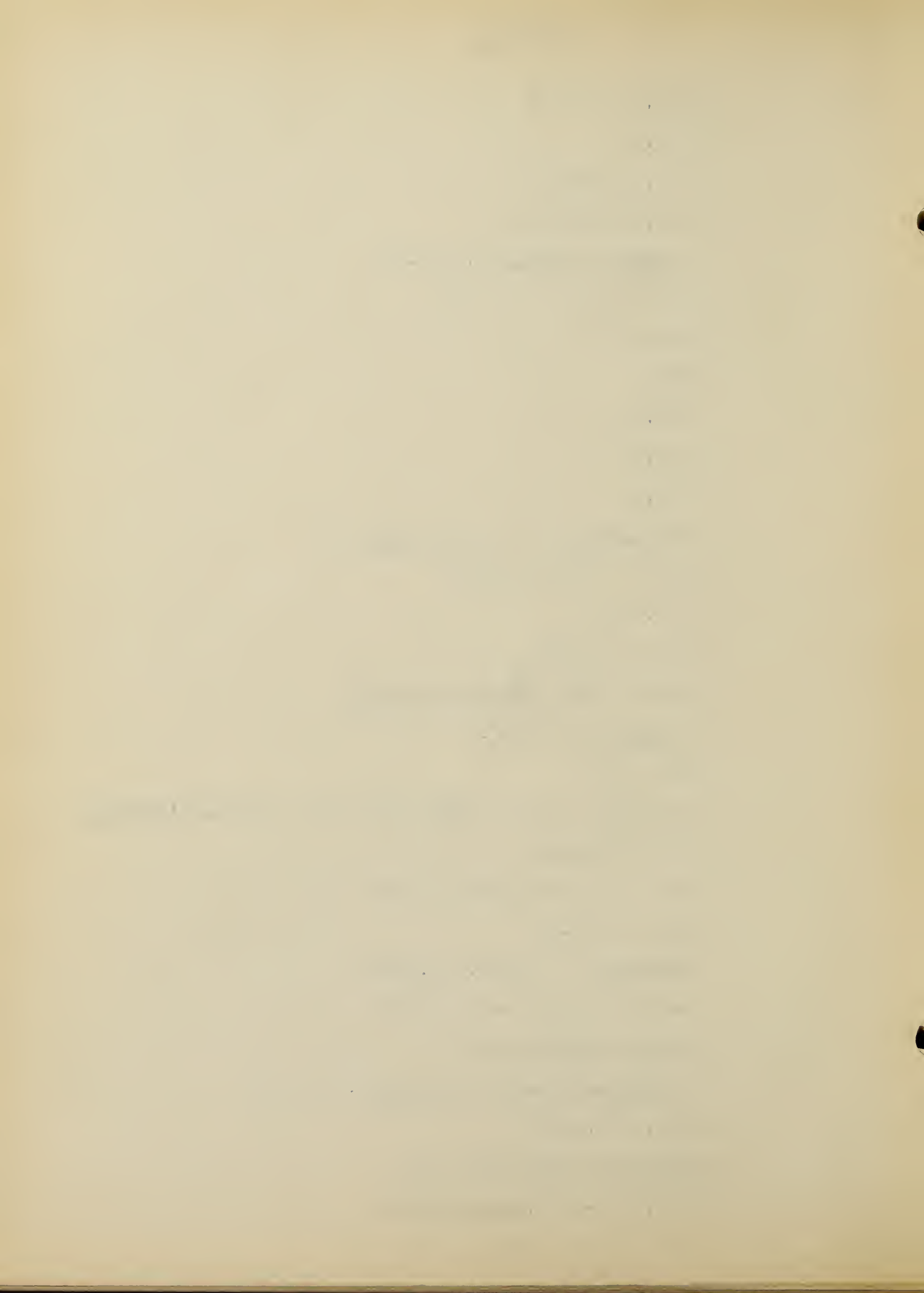
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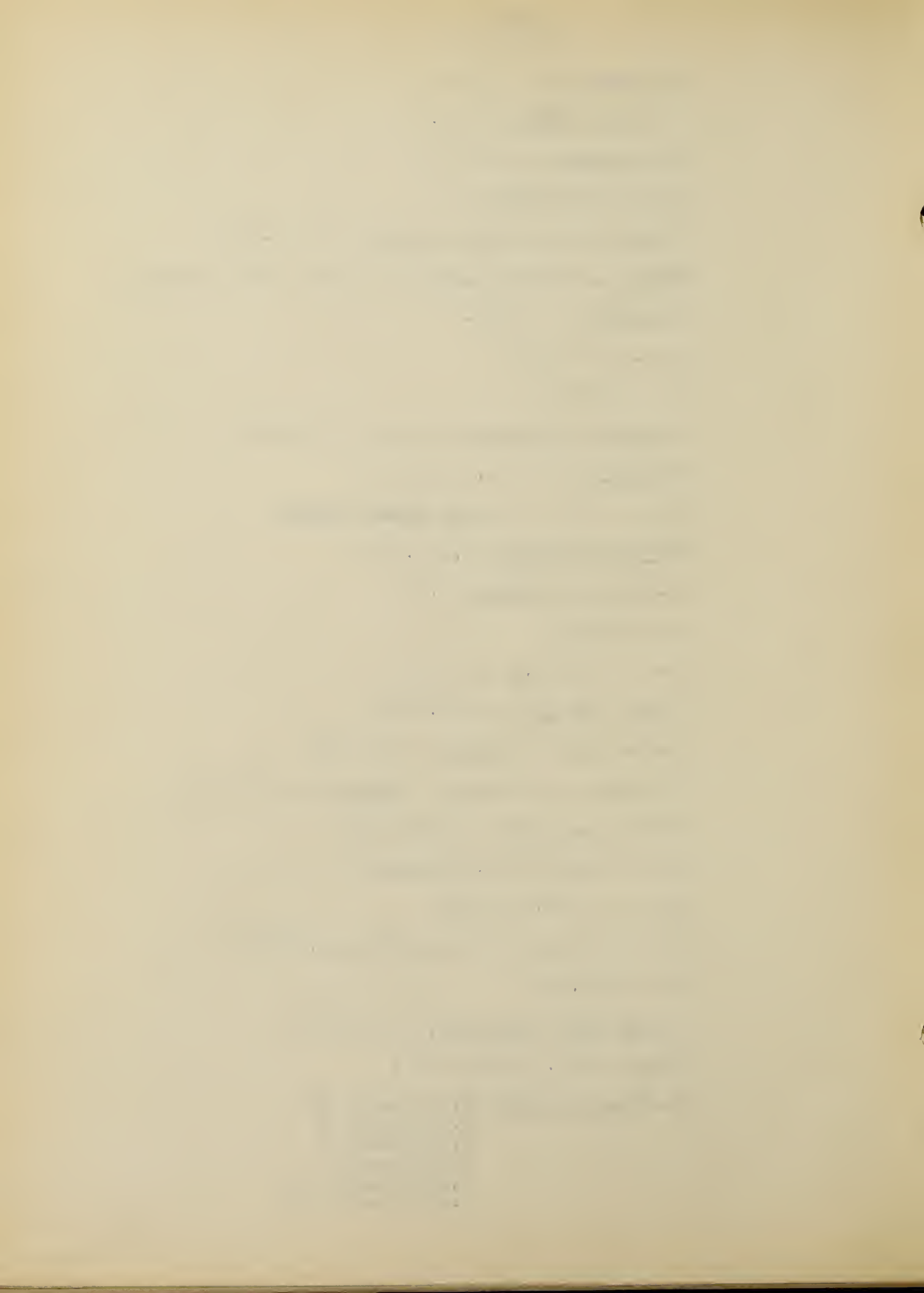
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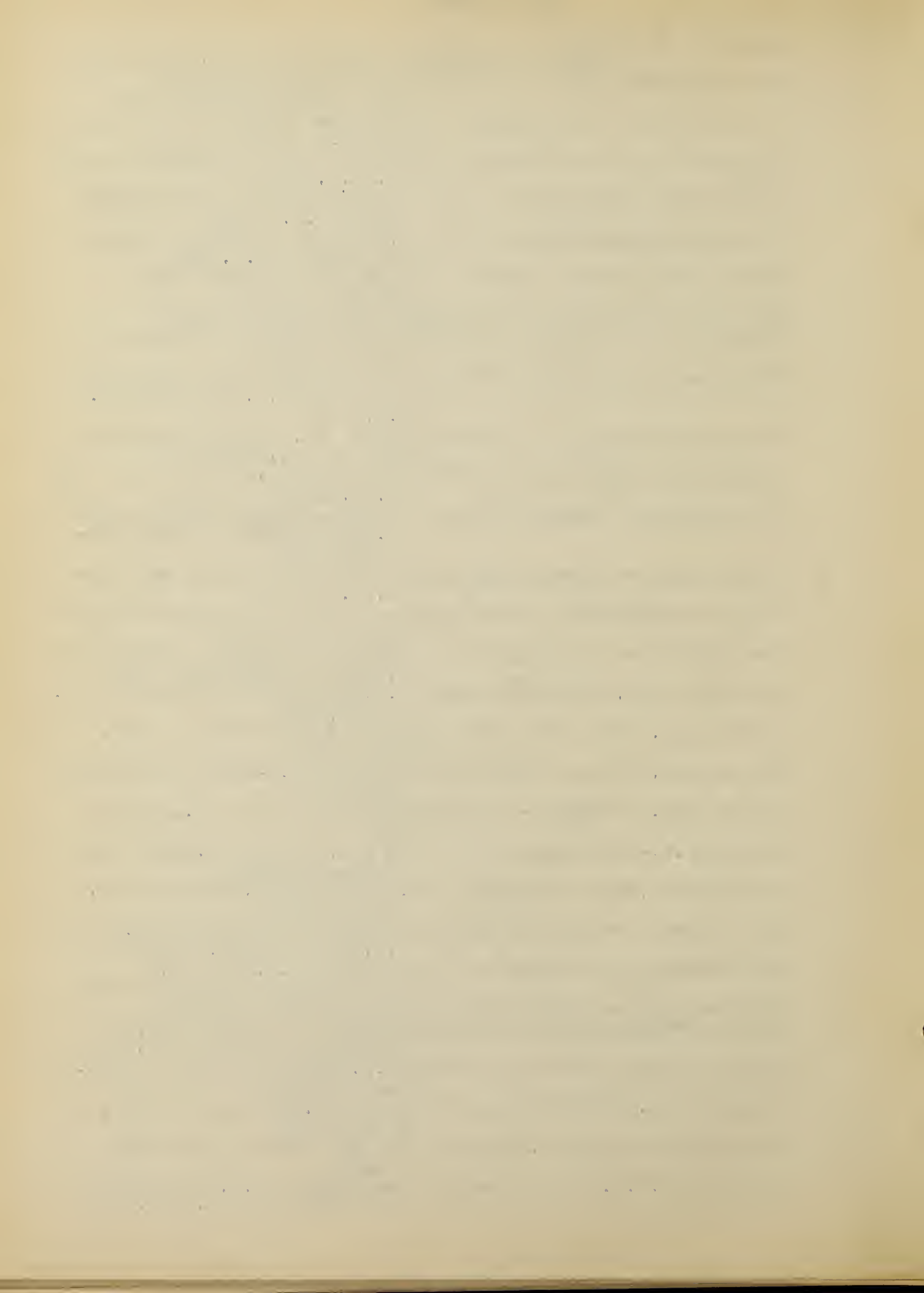
- 107-Tell, Act IV, Sc. 2, L. 2356-2360. Note how a Romanticist uses this same material, Lucinde, P. 41, L. 31-4
- 108-Jungfrau, Prologue, Sc. 3, L. 213-221
- 109-Act I, Sc. 4, L. 78-86
Act II, Sc. 6, L. 597-607
Act III, Sc. 1, L. 835-840, respectively
- 110-Luther, Selections 1-7
- 111-Tristan, P. 40
- 112-Inhigenie, Act II, Sc. 1, L. 1224-5
- 113-Herodes, Act I, Sc. 3, L. 306-310
- 114-Glaube und Heimat, P. 50 (Alt-Rott)
- 115-Der Spaziergang, L. 63
- 116-Jungfrau, setting or Prolog
- 117-Schlemihl, P. 81
- 118-Sappho, Act I, Sc. 2, L. 52
- 119-Faust, P. 147, L. 4436
- 120-Sappho, Act I, Sc. 3-L. 95
- 121-Sappho, Act I, Sc. 3-L. 95
- 122-Immensee, P. 44
- 123-Sappho, Act III, Sc. 5, L. 1126
- 124-Faust, P. 137, L. 4179
- 125-Nibelungenlied, P. 22, Stanza VI
- 126-Chapter XVI. Paragraph 3:- "Flüchtig sind Körper mit ihren sichtbaren Eigenschaften, die eigentlichen Gegenstände der Malerei."
Chapter XVII, First eight paragraphs
- 127-The German Spirit, P. 9
- 128-Die Romantische Zeichnung, P. 4
- 129-Geschichte der Deutschen Dichtung, P. 96
- 130-In der Fremde, Stanza, 4
- 131-Nacht, Stanza 1 and 3

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- 132-Hymne an die Nacht, L. 17-25
- 133-Nolle, No. 128
- 134-Nollen, No. 36
- 135-Nollen, No. 74
- 136-Im Frühling, Stanza III
- 137-Nollen, No. 269, last two stanzas
- 138-Eggert, No. 25, Stanza II
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- 139-Eggert, No. 1, Stanza II, VIII, XII
- 140-Eggert, No. 49, Stanza V
Eggert, No. 26, Stanza I
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- 141-Eggert, No. 26, P. 35

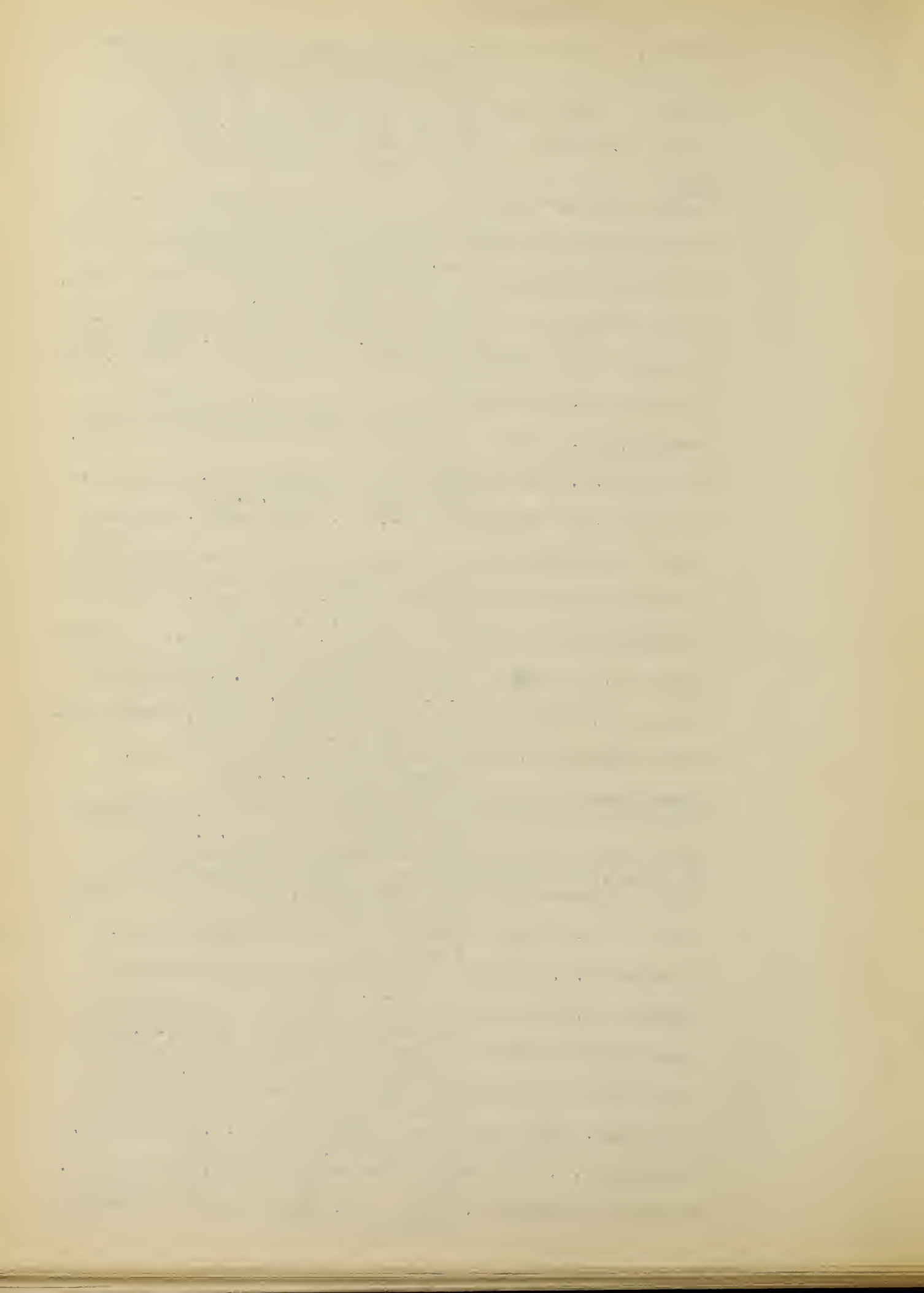
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